

# **HISTORY OF SEATTLE'S DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, ADVISORY COUNCILS, AND ASSOCIATED RECREATION COUNCIL**

Advisory Councils (ARC) are a vital part of the Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation's (DPR) program delivery system. DPR relies on hundreds of volunteer AC members for advice, assistance, and representation of the many Seattle Communities.

The first ACs began meeting in 1964. At that time they were primarily concerned with recommending activities, programs, and classes to be offered in their respective communities. They served as volunteers for recreation events and reviewed programs and project plans and their financial activities were very limited.

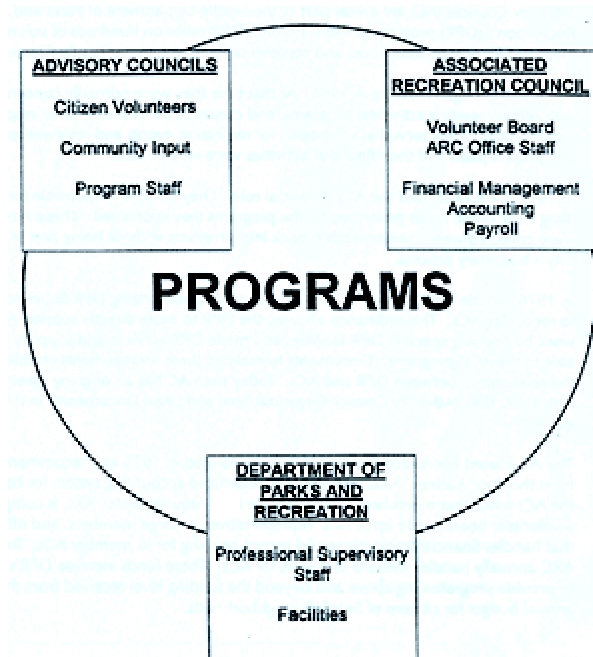
In 1971, DPR expanded the ACs' financial role. They became responsible for handling most of the funds generated by the programs they sponsored. These funds that were collected were then expended back into programs without being part of the City's budgetary process.

In 1976, Seattle City Ordinance 105655 was passed authorizing DPR Superintendent to recognize ACs. This ordinance allowed the DPR to more directly support ACs' work by opening space at DPR facilities. and made DPR services and supplies available to the ACs' programs. Documents formalized these arrangements establishing the relationship between DPR and ACs' Today each AC has an ongoing agreement with DPR. (See 'Advisory Council Organizational and Legal Documents" in this guide.)

The Associated Recreation Council (ARC) was formed in 1976 as a recommendation from the State Auditor. ARC provides a standardized accounting system for handling the ACs' funds ' that meets both City and State legal requirements. ARC is comprised of a volunteer board made up of ACs' representatives, at-large members, and office staff that handles financial transactions and record-keeping for its member ACs' Today ARC annually handles millions of dollars for ACs' These funds increase DPR's ability to provide programming above and beyond the funding level received from the City's annual budget for citizens of Seattle's neighborhoods.

**Advisory Councils,  
Associated Recreation Council, &  
Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation**

April, 1998



Many programs that are offered at Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation facilities result from a three way partnership among the Parks Department, citizen Advisory Councils, and the Associated Recreation Council.

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## Advisory Councils

The roles and responsibilities of the Advisory Councils (AC) are described and established in various documents, agreements and legislation. Many basic and guiding features are commonly applicable to all of the ACs. Some aspects of ACs' roles and responsibilities vary according to unique purposes and individual arrangements, AC members should review their respective legal documents to identify unique areas of responsibility.

## Responsibilities

The following describes AC responsibilities:

- Advise the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) regarding their respective programs, services, facilities and operations
- Assist the DPR in providing programs and services to the community
- Represent the benefiting community with regard to programs, services, facilities and operations
- Provide financial functions for their programs and services
- Employ staff for AC funded programs

## Roles

AC members carry out roles established to meet their collective responsibilities. Common tasks associated with these roles are presented below. Additional details on AC functions are provided in subsequent sections of this guide.

## Advising

- Present recreation-related concerns to the DPR, the community and elected officials
- Prioritize programs and services for the community
- Evaluate programs, services, facilities and operations and report results to DPR
- Recommend changes and improvements to programs, services, facilities and operations for DPR approval.

## Assisting

- Provide continuity in the operation of programs and services in the community
- Foster relevant communication and cooperation among neighborhood residents, institutions, schools, community groups, recreation officials, city personnel and other governmental agencies
- Recruit and provide volunteers to promote and work at programs and services

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## Representing

- Provide a clearly identified method for direct citizen input regarding programs, services, facilities, and operations
- Represent the needs, concerns, and interests of the community
- Link the Department of Parks and Recreation with the larger community through outreach activities
- Represent the AC at the Associated Recreation Council (ARC) board meetings when appropriate

## Finance

- Recognize and understand the significance of the ACs' non-profit status and operate accordingly
- Collect fees, budget and expend funds
- Use ARC services for accounting, recording transactions, payments and expenditure of funds
- Provide signature authority for up to six council members who may sign for issuance of payments, disbursements and credits
- Raise funds for programs and services
- Employ personnel for instruction and program activities funded by the AC (with approval of DPR)
- Assume agreed portion of personnel management responsibilities shared with DPR staff (i.e. hire, supervise, evaluate, train and dismiss)

All AC members are cautioned that no payment or in-kind compensation, such as reduced fees for programs or priority registration for classes, is permitted as a benefit of AC membership or volunteer activities.

## Deferral to City of Seattle and DPR Authority

According to the legal arrangements establishing ACs, the City of Seattle and Department of Parks and Recreation reserve the authority to make policy and administrative decisions. ACs thus may not mandate activities, programs or policies. The City specifically retains the final authority to set fee structures and establish operating procedures for its facilities. However since Department staff are usually participating with ACs in the planning and development of activities and programs, it would be very unusual for a proposed activity or program to not be approved.

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## Recreation Staff

Department of Parks and Recreation staff who work in partnership with individual Advisory Councils are either Senior Recreation Coordinators or Recreation Coordinators (RCs). They are trained in programming, management, and working with diverse populations. A primary part of their responsibility is to work in concert with their respective AC to provide recreational and educational programs and service to the community.

In the partnership between individual ACs and DPR sites or programs, the major responsibilities of RCs are best viewed as follows:

- Offer information during AC meetings regarding programs and services
- Provide current information on recreational and educational trends in Seattle and in those fields in general
- Keep updated on current trends in recreation and leisure
- In conjunction with the AC hire, train , supervise, and evaluate AC employees
- Seek input from community sources in addition to ACs to develop new programs and services, and tailor existing ones for their user groups
- Assist ACs in financial management of programs and services
- Link ACs to the DPR services, facilities, equipment, and information as needed to provide programs and services by the ACs
- Help supervise AC programs and services
- Attend AC meetings
- Assist in organizing, coordinating and evaluating AC programs and services
- Consider any and all recommendations made by their respective AC in developing and implementing programs, services, operations, and facilities
- Develop promotional materials that include information on AC programs and services
- Keep ACs updated about DPR and its actions that relate to AC communities
- Study their service area to use their professional expertise to develop new programs and services for their specific communities
- Sign as the "requestor" for disbursements of AC funds, petty cash replenishments, advance requests, and payroll disbursements. Manage AC funds in accordance with the ARC Accounting Manual

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

- Sign applications for new AC members nominated by ACs and send nominee's applications to the DPR Superintendent's Office for final approval
- Assist ACs in the preparation of their annual budget

## **Recreation Coordinators Limits of Authority**

Due to the nature of ACs as independent, non-profit organizations, understanding the' limitations of DPR employees' involvement with ACs is critical to a cooperative and productive relationship.

- If an AC needs information regarding DPR , the AC should first contact the RC, but may also contact the DPR Division's Recreation Manager for clarification.
- DPR staff may not make, second, or vote on AC motions.
- Since ACs can provide valuable community input and support, RCs should consider any and all recommendations from ACs regarding programs, services, operations, and facilities

# FINANCES

ACs and DPR share the common purposes of providing community supported, high quality programs and services. The separate legal status of ACs and DPR creates conveniences at the same time that it enhances opportunities to meet their common purposes. An understanding of the shared purpose is essential to harmonious and successful financial operations. The information in this section briefly addresses the financial policies and procedures that every AC member should know.

ACs operate as tax-exempt, non-profit corporations [known' as 501 c(3) organizations under federal tax law]. While some ACs are independently incorporated, most of them obtain their legal status as members of the over-arching 501 c(3) status of the Associated Recreation Council.

All ACs are required to be members of ARC (even if independently incorporated). ARC provides many uniform financial, payroll and accounting services to the ACs. The use of these services is necessary for accurate and responsible financial management. ARC charges fees to the ACs for its services..

The primary documents for reference to detailed financial activities and practices are:

- The ARC Accounting Manual
- The Agreement between the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation and Recreation Advisory Councils
- Policies and Procedures for Financial Management of Community Advisory Councils
- Seattle City Ordinance # 105655

The recreation facilities in which most AC programs operate are owned by the City. DPR and the local AC share those facilities for their programs as is set out in the "Ordinance" and the "Agreement" noted immediately above. ACs are given priority use of the City recreation facilities for their approved programs ahead of all other organizations and individuals.

One special benefit created by the separate legal status of ACs is the retention and preservation of all fees, revenues and funds in the local community for use in operating local AC programs. Local AC funds are considered public funds but they are managed separately and apart from the City budgetary and financial processes (although DPR approves AC budgets).

# FINANCES

## Financial Checks and Balances

Because AC funds are not processed through the City's budgetary process, special sets of checks and balances are established to assure proper and accurate management of these funds. As public funds, all AC accounts and financial activities are open to public inspection. Thus, prudent use of funds is always appropriate. Three parties are involved in the checks and balances system of assuring proper financial procedures - the AC, ARC and DPR.

Among the many financial procedures which assure effective controls over moneys and financial practices of ACs are the following:

- Both ACs and RCs must sign expenditure requisitions - the RC to request expenditure and an appropriate AC member to authorize the expenditure
- Expenditure requisitions are processed by ARC
- AC budgets are produced by the AC and submitted to DPR for approval
- Payroll disbursement requests for AC employees must be signed by an appropriate AC member and submitted to ARC for payment
- RCs are held responsible for AC petty cash management and must follow specific procedures for use and recording of activities of this fund
- All AC financial transactions are processed through and recorded by ARC and checked for proper procedures
- All AC receipts must be recorded and sent to ARC within two working days
- ARC provides monthly financial statements for each AC with copies supplied to DPR
- ARC may conduct audits on a random and unannounced basis



# FINANCES

## Where Funds Come From

Advisory Council (AC) funds come from a variety of sources. The following is a list of those sources:

- Class and User Fees
- Donations
- Grants
- Fund Raisers
- Vending Machines
- Special Events
- Summer Day Camps
- Sports Registration and League Fees
- Investments

## Where Funds Go To

Advisory Council funds are expended in many different ways also. The following is a list of those ways:

- AC employee's wages
- Class Supplies
- Class Equipment
- Scholarships
- Awards, Trophies, Banquets
- Equipment Improvements
- Advertising, Promotion
- Postage
- Staff Training and Travel
- Umpires' and Officials' Fees
- Field Reservation Fees
- Adult Participation Fees
- Refunds
- Donations to Other Programs
- Taxes
- Field Trips and Group Travel

## Ownership of Purchases

All goods, equipment, and materials purchased by an AC become the property of the City of Seattle.

# **FINANCES**

## **AC Accounting through ARC**

Each Advisory Council is responsible for the management of its funds, which are public funds. Through its membership in the ARC, each AC receives accounting services as well as a substantial amount of financial record-keeping services. These services are necessary for responsible financial management.

## **The Associated Recreation Council**

The following should help explain who ARC is:

- ARC Board membership is drawn from individual AC members, with the chair drawn from the ARC Board
- ARC Board members attend individual AC meetings at least once a year
- Minutes of ARC Board Meetings are distributed at individual AC meetings
- ACs have 501 (c)3 nonprofit status through their membership in ARC.

## **Fees Charged by ARC**

Each AC is charged for ARC's services at a fixed percentage of the dollar amount of each check issued on behalf of the ACs. Any check(s) issued for more than \$3,000.00 are only charged the percentage fee on the first \$3,000.00. The ARC service fee is reviewed each year along with the ARC Budget for the next fiscal year. The ARC Board will at that time determine the need for increasing or decreasing the fee.

## **Forms: Use & Submission**

ARC provides its accounting services based on the use of certain forms for recording payroll, receipts and expenditure data at the site of the AC's activities. Responsibility for proper use of forms and the submission of them to ARC is the responsibility of the DPR professional staff.

## **Account Review & Reconciliation**

All members of the Advisory Council should receive a copy of the AC's Monthly Financial Report from the ARC office and have a basic understanding of the financial activity of their Council.

Each month the Treasurer of each AC reviews the deposits and completed disbursement requests against the ARC Monthly Financial Report. The Advisory Council general membership will spend a certain amount of time at each meeting reviewing and discussing expenditures for the normal operation of the programs. All the members are involved in the financial responsibilities and decisions of the AC.

# **FINANCES**

## **Expenditure Authorization**

Each AC must authorize by vote the overall expenditure of moneys from its account for programs that it sponsors or co-sponsors with the DPR. Each AC's designated signatories must authorize the issuance of each individual check for those programs. It is the responsibility of those signatories to double check time sheets, authorize payroll for work completed and review documentation for the payment of bills. Most often, an AC chooses its Treasurer to act as one of the "designated signatories."

## **Handling of Funds Received**

Each AC, plus DPR, and ARC must be confident at all times that all moneys received for the account of each AC are properly handled, recorded and deposited. Any irregularities noted by any member should be immediately reported to the AC members, ARC and the DPR.

## **Check Requests**

The RC requests checks for the payment of payroll and bills for programs he/she is coordinating on behalf of the DPR and the AC. The AC's signatory reviews that request and authorizes the expenditure if the following criteria are met:

- It has been authorized by the AC
- it is properly documented
- It is within the AC's program budget
- It is within the AC's current fund balance

Note: Each AC may designate up to six Council members who may authorize AC expenditures. Other AC members may neither authorize nor sign a check from the AC.

## **Availability of Accounting Information**

All information recorded and retained within the site, as well as all financial information recorded and reported by ARC, is to be available for inspection by AC members, DPR and the public.

# **FINANCES**

## **Developing a Budget**

Budgeting so that each program can be understood for its financial impact on overall operations is called "program budgeting" and is a common standard in government and business alike. Only by gaining this understanding can the Advisory Council (AC) make effective choices about which programs to offer, expand, discontinue or how to set fees for them.

## **Reviewing Prior Year(s) Records**

One effective way to begin the development of a budget is to review the financial records of prior years or quarters. The prior records report the various types of fees and moneys collected and those spent. An important reference point is to determine the overall gains or losses to the AC resulting from the prior period of operations, then for further refinement determine from prior budget records which programs generate gains and which produce losses within the specific program. This latter task can be somewhat challenging because it is often difficult to determine how to allocate expenditures to each program. Nonetheless, examining finances by scrutinizing each program is the only way to know the impact on the Advisory Council's funds of the various programs.

## **Resources for Review**

Reviewing payment and requisition records should help determine how expenditures relate to specific programs. RCs are able to help examine the expenditures for each program. Obtaining assistance through ARC is another resource for understanding the reporting of expenditures and revenue collections.

## **Operating Programs at A Loss**

While an AC may choose to operate some programs at a "loss" and make up for such losses through other program offerings, it is obviously necessary to have the overall financial result of programs be positive. ACs should consider setting fees or operating programs so that a small financial gain is received and thus new offerings, special "free" programs, or scholarship assistance to programs can also be sponsored.

# **FINANCES**

## **Fund Raising**

Fund raising for program operations, support and special events is a primary concern for many AC. Fund raising is a way in which the AC can support the program(s) and become more involved.

## **Responsibility**

The AC membership must take full responsibility for its fund raising. It is important to note that City of Seattle employees MAY NOT initiate, plan, or carry out Advisory Council fund raisers. This policy is based on the unique relationship between the City and the ACs.

Fund raising should occur when a specific need is identified, the campaign is well planned and the entire AC can rally behind the effort. Fund raising will benefit from communication efforts among ACs. Staff networks, ARC, and joint AC activities are ways in which experiences with different fund raisers can be shared. It is worth the extra time to research the past success of a fund raiser before trying it.

## **Objectives**

ACs should write an objective and a plan for implementation of the fund raiser. The objective should tell how the new funds will be spent in addition to stating how much money the fund raiser is expected to generate. Objectives can be written that will make the fund raising activities focused and congruent with the AC's financial plan.

## **Grants**

Grants are another form of generating funds for program operations, support, and special events. The main sources of grants come from government agencies and private foundations. These are listed in reference materials on Internet web sites and at the public libraries. The time involved in securing a grant is well worth the benefits realized to the AC in its ability to provide additional programming and special events. Grant applications must be reviewed by the DPR and the ARC, to ensure accuracy and compliance with the stated objectives of the AC, the 501 (c) (3) tax exempt designation, proper signatories.

# **ADVISORY COUNCILS AS EMPLOYERS**

Many ACs perform the essential function of employing staff in educational and recreational program positions. Services provided by such staff vary widely across the City. Common employment positions include referees, daycare and summer day camp staff, instructors of aerobics, music, martial arts, dance, fine arts and athletics. But many more services are provided at DPR facilities by skilled people who make special programs and activities available to the community.

## **Specialist Agreements**

Individuals are employed by ACs through a specialist agreement designed by and available through DPR. The specialist agreement must state the essential details of the employment arrangement including name of employee, term of employment, job description, rate of pay, etc. The agreement must be signed by the employee, the appropriate DPR official and an AC member. The agreement must be properly and fully completed and filed with both DPR and the AC. All employment records are permanently retained by DPR.

## **Rates of Pay**

DPR sets the wage scales for AC employees on an hourly basis. Several categories of employees are established and wage rates for each are limited to the predetermined range. The final rate of pay for a specialist employee is fixed by the AC in conjunction with the RC.

## **Contracts and Other Agreements for Employment**

Occasionally ACs agree to employ individuals through other special arrangements. One common arrangement provides for an individual to perform the agreed function for which a fee would be charged to participants. A percentage of the total fees would be paid to the AC. Piano instruction is an example where the instructor would make all arrangements with students and set fees. In return for the use of the instrument and facilities owned by DPR, the instructor would pay a portion of fees to the AC. It is necessary for the AC and DPR to agree on the range of fees charged to "clients" of instructors using DPR facilities. Fees should be stipulated in the agreement.

ACs may also contract with individuals- or businesses to provide certain services as stipulated by agreement. Many arrangements through contracts are used for common business purposes such as vending machines or production of a brochure. In these cases the business party is not an "employee." Contracts should be finalized only by or with the assistance and approval of the RC. All contracts are filed with the DPR administrative office in charge of contracts. This office may also be an important source of information and assistance in the preparation of a contract for service so as to

# ADVISORY COUNCILS AS EMPLOYERS

assure that all city and state laws are satisfied and proper accounting for the services rendered can be monitored and recorded.

## Employee Management and Supervision

The 'Agreement between the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation and Recreation Advisory Councils' provides that ACs shall "... hire and fire instruction and program leadership staff, with the approval of the Department." AC personnel management may be a joint effort of the ACs and the RCs.

Most ACs allocate full responsibility for AC employee administration, management and supervision to the RC. However, ACs do have the authority to participate in all or any portion of personnel management of their employees. In this respect the range of choices made by the many ACs over their history varies widely. Some ACs take very active roles in hiring and personnel management with highly successful and rewarding results. To do so may require a high level of familiarity with work rules, laws and codes of conduct for personnel issues, depending on the roles assumed by the AC members involved. Failure to observe good procedures can create problems in employee/employer relations and even lead to legal proceedings.

ACs participating in personnel activities are strongly encouraged to clearly define the roles and activities in which AC members are to be involved. It is equally important to establish a clear understanding with RCs as to the roles allocated solely to DPR staff. Roles which AC members may assume for an extended time may be drafted into the AC by-laws. An example would be the creation of a standing "personnel committee." The by-laws may further clarify the functions of that committee such as interview, negotiate terms (within DPR guidelines), hire (with DPR approval) and provide evaluations. The by-laws may also determine who shall be on such a committee. Inclusion of the RC on personnel committees assures that the employment process is a joint partnership between the AC and DPR. When ACs take action in regard only to certain personnel actions, the determination to do so should be stated in the minutes of AC meetings or the AC records. It is very important to have a clear record of responsibility in personnel actions, remembering that DPR always assumes the ultimate risk of unfortunate results.

## DPR as a Personnel Management Resource

DPR assumes responsibility for all activities and employees operating within its facilities. While legal liabilities may extend to ACs, it is certain that the City of Seattle (and DPR) are always exposed to risks of liabilities stemming from employment arrangements and employee performance. Therefore, DPR attempts to train all RCs

## **ADVISORY COUNCILS AS EMPLOYERS**

and supervisory DPR staff in the rules and proper conduct of personnel management. The City and DPR have established many procedures for personnel management that are intended to make DPR staff and AC employee management successful. ACs participating in employee management can find advice and assistance through DPR and especially the RC. Closely following DPR rules is important and protects ACs, DPR and the employee.

### **Cautionary Notes about Personnel Management**

At some levels personnel management is a highly developed skill and a major challenge. Even when best intentions are applied and good employee/employer relations are apparent, difficulties can arise or return from a prior history. It is extremely difficult to outline good personnel practices. However, most people are aware of difficulties that can arise in hiring and dismissal processes. It is advisable to be aware of several common issues that can cause large, costly and libelous problems. Those issues would include discrimination, privacy of personal information or records, fairness, sexual harassment, wrongful dismissal, and disputed evaluation reports, to name several.

Caution by ACs and individual AC members choosing to participate in AC staff employment activities is always appropriate. Being named in a legal action by an employee who believes himself or herself to have been wronged can be unpleasant and potentially costly to an AC, an AC member or the City.

Still, DPR or the City of Seattle Law Department would defend an AC member whose questionable action or decision was taken or made within the normal course and scope of duties of a volunteer to the AC and thereby to the City.



# **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

Job descriptions help clarify the roles of AC members. They are used as guidelines. Any changes in job descriptions should be approved by the appropriate Recreation Manager. A copy of these job descriptions should be provided to interested citizens and reviewed with new members during orientation.

more information about AC job descriptions can be found in the following materials:

- Constitutions of individual Advisory Councils
- By Laws of individual Advisory Councils

## **Advisory Council Member**

The job of an individual AC member consists of the following tasks:

- Prepare for, attend, and actively participate in monthly meetings
- Appropriately share expertise, thoughts, and opinions with the AC and RC
- Serve on committees to further the work undertaken by the AC
- Volunteer time and energy to special events, fund raisers, membership recruitment, and other programs
- Stay abreast of community concerns and interests in order to represent citizen and participant needs
- Review past AC business including the minutes of each meeting
- Support programs and decisions adopted by the AC, DPR, and City
- Understand the financial structure of the AC and approve the AC budget
- Evaluate programs and services and provide recommendations based on knowledge of community needs and interests
- Refer suggestions and comments that the public provides regarding programs, facilities, and service to the appropriate staff representative or office
- Serve one full term the length of which is established in the AC's constitution.  
AC members may be recommended by AC for additional terms

# **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

## **Officers**

The AC Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer are elected annually at a date set by the AC. Eligibility for an elected position on the AC is determined by the individual AC.

## **Chairperson**

The Chairperson is the designated leader of the AC and is accountable for the AC's performance.

Tasks for this elected position include the following:

- Plan the agenda for and facilitate monthly meetings
- Ensure that the minutes of each meeting are faithfully recorded and copies are distributed to AC members and the RC
- Keep AC members fully informed and take action to fulfill the obligations of the AC's constitution and by-laws
- Monitor membership and attendance, and initiate membership termination proceedings and recruitment of new members
- Lead an active and cooperative effort to provide public recreational and educational opportunities to all members of the community
- Work with the RC, AC, and citizens to plan and develop public programs and services
- Support and advocate for programs and services adopted by the AC
- Ensure that the AC is financially stable and adheres to the budget
- Appoint committee chairpersons when needed and provide the necessary authority and opportunities for the chairpersons to report to the AC
- consult with the RC regularly
- Appropriately distribute tasks to the Vice Chairperson and AC members
- Help establish goals and objectives for AC activities
- Prepare, review, and sign AC correspondence
- Verify any authorization naming members to represent the AC at Associated Recreation Council ARC meetings or as signatories for the AC's account
- May act as one of the AC's six possible signatories for disbursements request authorizations
- Appoint a committee for recommending new members

# JOB DESCRIPTIONS

## Vice Chairperson

This is also an elected position and tasks for **Vice Chairperson** include:

- Perform the Chairperson duties if the Chairperson is absent
- Accept the responsibilities of the Chairperson if the Chairperson is absent
- Perform the duties that the Chairperson assigns.
- May act as one of the AC's six possible signatories for disbursement request authorizations

## Treasurer

This is also an elected position and tasks for **Treasurer** include:

- Account for the collecting and disbursement of all funds
- Accurately report and interpret the monthly AC financial statement for AC members
- Inform, advise, and recommend on all AC financial matters
- May act as one of the AC's six possible signatories for disbursements request authorizations
- Work with the RC and Chairperson to prepare annual budget

## Secretary

This is also an elected position and tasks for **Secretary** include:

- Record attendance at all AC meetings
- Record, revise (as necessary), distribute, and file monthly meeting minutes
- Provide minutes and the agenda for distribution to all members prior to the monthly meeting
- Attend to all AC correspondence and distribution
- Verify any authorization naming members to represent the AC at ARC meetings or as signatories for the AC's account, along with the Chairperson
- May act as one of the Advisory Council's six possible signatories for disbursement request authorizations
- Update membership list and provide it to DPR and ARC

## **JOB DESCRIPTIONS**

AC members are not expected to donate money or personal property to the AC, programs, or facilities which they represent or to act against their personal belief systems.

Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation employees may not serve on Advisory Councils.

# MEETINGS

Advisory Councils meet at different times throughout the year and on different days of the month. Many ACs meet together monthly from September through May and may hold less formal meetings during the Summer. Each AC's by-laws explains when their AC will meet.

ACs are public representative bodies and as a result, all meetings are always open to the public. However, if a citizen would like to speak about issues, or the agenda, or add new items to the agenda the citizen must request to be recognized by the Chairperson during a meeting or request to be placed on a subsequent agenda. Recognition is at the discretion of the AC Chairperson.

## Successful Meetings

Successful meetings require everyone's contribution. The contribution each member makes includes:

- Regular attendance
- Complete preparation
- Active participation
- Commitment to good meeting manners

## The Importance of Attendance

Many ACs include a statement regarding attendance in their AC constitution and/or by-laws.

It is important that members attend AC meetings for many reasons, some of which are:

- Regular attendance promotes active participation
- It is difficult to attain a quorum without regular attendance. A quorum is the number of members present as indicated in the ACs by-laws necessary to vote on and pass AC agenda items
- Reports and information have to be repeated if members are absent

# MEETINGS

## Participation

Members active participation is the most important thing for AC. Some reasons for this are that they:

- Provide their own unique talents, knowledge, and experiences
- Represent a segment of their community
- Provide a forum for working together cooperatively, sharing ideas, and achieving accomplishments

## Meeting Procedures

Practicing good meeting etiquette is everyone's responsibility. Good meeting manners allow that the purposes of the meeting may be achieved according to schedule, that everyone who wants to contribute will have the opportunity, and that the items that are important to the whole AC - those on the agenda- may be addressed.

ACs conduct their meetings according to parliamentary procedure like many boards and organizations. The intent of this procedure is to move the proceedings along while making sure that everyone has the opportunity to be heard.

Parliamentary procedure is a set of rules for conduct at meetings. *Robert's Rules of Order*, written by Henry M. Robert and published in 1876, is the basic handbook of operations according to parliamentary procedure.

AC Chairpersons, RCs, and long time members should remember that many people are unfamiliar with meetings structured and conducted according to parliamentary procedure. During a new member's orientation, the meeting procedures should be fully explained.

*Robert's Rules of Order* are meant to be used as a tool. If at any time during a meeting the formality of Robert's Rules becomes a hindrance to productive discussion, the Chairperson may set them aside.

**Note:** RCs **may not participate** in the motion or voting processes except to provide consultation to the group. Additionally, guests, invited and uninvited, may not participate in the motion or voting processes.

# MEETINGS

## The Agenda

Establishing a clearly stated purpose for the meeting helps clarify what the AC wants to accomplish and what members can expect from the meeting. This also helps the Chairperson manage the meeting more effectively.

There are several purposes for Advisory Council meetings, which include:

- Exchanging information through staff and committee reports
- Solving problems
- Making recommendations
- Brainstorming projects
- Setting objectives, goals, and work plans
- Sharing concerns
- Explaining and debating issues
- Recognizing service
- Making decisions

The agenda lets AC members know what topics are scheduled for discussion and what action(s) will be taken. The agenda is written by the AC Chairperson.

The RC distributes the agendas one week in advance to AC members and invited guests. The agenda is accompanied by the minutes from the last meeting and other pertinent materials.

## The Minutes

Minutes are a written summary of the previous AC meeting. All AC minutes are public documents and are available for review. AC members who would like to review the minutes from previous meetings should contact their RC or AC Chairperson.

A procedure for the writing, distribution, and filing of the minutes is established by each AC.

# RECRUITMENT

Recruitment is the on-going process of enlisting new members for an AC to provide new perspectives, expertise, and enthusiasm to a AC. For this to occur, a recruitment program should be established.

Many people believe that public service is an obligation. Membership on an AC is an excellent way for people to give back to the community. However, people's time is precious and many other agencies and institutions are vying for the same volunteer hours.

Some ACs have found it helpful to establish a membership Committee to oversee new member recruitment and orientation as well as other member concerns.

Once a citizen shows interest in serving on an AC, the staff and AC members must capitalize on that interest. Volunteers need to know that they are valued and needed-if not, they may find another, more appreciative group to serve. To show that the time and energy of potential and new members are valued:

- Recruit members for their talents and interests that would serve the AC and/or its programs and services
- Encourage a potential member to meet with the RC and AC Chairperson and discuss how the volunteer's knowledge, skills and abilities might be utilized by the AC
- Give the new member a complete orientation conducted by the AC Chairperson or membership committee chairperson and a RC immediately upon accepting membership to the AC
- Encourage the new member to seek clarity on issues at meetings
- Introduce new members to other members of the AC

Membership on the AC is a big commitment to the DPR, to the community, and to the provision of leisure opportunities to many different people. We cannot expect that kind of commitment without showing new and potential members the AC's commitment to them.

## How to Recruit

Before a recruitment drive begins, preparatory steps in planning must take place as follows:

- Define clearly the roles of AC members in relation to the AC's programs and services



# RECRUITMENT

- Have copies of the job description and detailed explanation of the position of an AC member from this booklet
- Be prepared to handle the response to recruitment activities

ACs represent the participants of existing programs as well as the recreational needs and desires of the entire community. Achieving adequate representation from the community should be the foremost goal of recruitment.

To achieve this goal the RC and the AC should understand the total make-up of the community. Existing members are a very good source for recruiting new members. They may know other community members that will enhance the current AC roster.

## When To Recruit

For most AC, recruitment is ongoing. The activities and programs of the ACs are public and generate regular interest in the program and the AC. Because of the ongoing nature of AC recruitment, the planning elements should always be in place. job descriptions should be up-to-date. A method for handling inquiries should be ongoing. Everyone involved in recruitment should understand their individual role on the AC and the role of the AC it-self in relation to the program.

## Getting New Members On Board

ACs have different processes of inviting and nominating new members to the AC. It is the prerogative of each AC to choose how recruitment of new members will take place. However, the recruitment and orientation of new AC members should be a shared responsibility of the RC and the AC.

Interested new candidates for membership should complete a membership profile sheet available through the RC and must successfully pass a Washington State Patrol background check before becoming a voting member of the AC.

The length of an Advisory Council membership is set by the constitution of each AC. The member can be recommended for another term by the AC which then is approved by the Department of Parks and Recreation Superintendent.

# ORIENTATION

Orientations for new AC members are very important and can be very motivating. Along with giving them valuable information, the orientation gives the volunteer the clear message that their time and energy are valued.

The AC -and staff are also helped by getting the new member contributing quickly. A new member needs an orientation to be effective and will become a member of the team faster. An orientation will also help a new member become interested in positions of leadership and responsibility..

## Procedure

The following are the steps that new AC members should take to familiarize themselves with the AC and related information and personnel:

1. Receive and become familiar with the following written materials:
  - A copy of "Communities in Motion." The set of pertinent AC documents (constitution, bylaws, policies and procedures, etc.)
  - An agenda, minutes of recent meetings and an information packet for the next meeting of the AC
  - job descriptions for AC members and officers
  - Copy of the current AC budget
2. Tour the facility or discuss program area with staff
3. **Meet the** Program staff and the Division Recreation Manager

## What to Include

New AC member orientations should by necessity be site specific and all new member orientations should answer the following questions:

### Activities

- What programs and services has the AC been involved with in the past year?
- How do different ACs communicate and work together?
- What is the individual liability for AC members for programs the AC runs?
- What is the ARC and the AC's relationship to it?

# ORIENTATION

## Meetings

- How often does the AC meet?
- When and where does it meet?
- Is child care provided?
- How are the meetings run and how are decisions made?
- Is there committee work?
- What kinds of things can the AC make decisions about?
- Do RCs vote on AC decisions? What constitutes a quorum?

## Each Member's Role

- How much time can members expect to spend on AC meetings and activities?
- Can a member speak on behalf of the AC publicly?
- Are members expected to donate money or goods to the AC?

## General Information

- How many ACs are there?
- When was this AC started?
- What are the AC and DPR Mission Statements?
- How many members are on the AC?
- How many officers are there on this AC, who are they and how are they elected?
- How does a member become an officer?
- How is the DPR organized and where do the ACs fit into this structure?
- Who are the RCs and how long have they been assigned to this Program?

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section has some of the most commonly asked questions and answers to those questions. When possible each question has a definitive "Yes" or "No" answer; however, when there is no definitive answer, the explanation following the question should help answer the question. Even when the answer is definitive, an explanation for the answer follows. Although great care was taken to ensure the answers here are complete, if **further clarification is needed** please talk with other Advisory Council (AC) members, Recreation Coordinators (RC), and Department of Recreation and Parks (DPR) staff.

### **How are new advisory council members recruited, chosen and approved?**

Potential advisory councils members are identified and recruited by department staff and other advisory council members from among the residents of the service area of the department facility. Staff and current advisory council members seek out residents with an active interest in the programs and services of the department, the ability to devote time and effort to the facility and its programs, and an ability to objectively represent the interests of the broader community in the area of recreation services. Potential advisory council members are "nominated" by the advisory council, and formally approved by the Superintendent.

### **How are ARC Board members selected, and by whom?**

All advisory councils are members of the Associated Recreation Council, and a member of any officially recognized advisory council is eligible to be nominated for and elected to a three year term on ARC Board. Nominations to the Board are made by a nominating committee made up of the chairperson from the Board and three other advisory council representatives from the general membership of the ARC. Election of Board members are held at the ARC annual meeting in October. The term of office for each Director is three years.

### **What happens if an advisory council becomes ineffective or simply falls apart?**

The Seattle Municipal Code authorizes the Superintendent to officially "recognize" advisory councils, including the establishment of criteria for recognition. (See Ordinance 105655, and Department Policies & Procedures-Recognition of Community Advisory Councils). This recognition is what enables advisory councils to conduct programs in department facilities, charge fees to the public, and represent the interests of the community in advising the Department on needed programs and services. Similarly, and as also provided by the Municipal Code, such "recognition" can be withdrawn in the event the advisory council fails to meet minimum standards or simply ceases to exist. In the event an advisory council simply ceases to exist due to non-participation of its membership, the Department will undertake to create a new advisory council from among interested residents from the community and/or service

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

area of the facility or program. Once the new advisory council meets the criteria for recognition, it will assume the responsibilities of the former advisory council, including any and all funds held by ARC for the advisory council. In the event that recognition of an advisory council is withdrawn by the Superintendent for its failure to meet one or more criteria for recognition, the department would undertake the same process of creating and recognizing a new advisory council.

### **Who do advisory council funds "belong to?"**

State and local auditors, the City Law Department and the Attorney General's office have on several occasions determined that funds collected for advisory councils for programs in Department facilities are "public" in nature. They are collected by a private entity, under conditions that they be used for specified public purposes that are consistent with the mission of the Department. Since the fees are collected in Department facilities, it is an obligation of the Department that the funds be utilized as intended. At one time, some local and state officials were of the opinion that these funds should actually be deposited in the City Treasury, to be budgeted and expended as a part of the Department budget. In the late 1970's and early 1980's, the department and several advisory council and ARC Board members successfully convinced officials that the current structure of official, department-"recognized" advisory councils and the central accounting and fiduciary role of ARC was sufficient to protect the public's interest in these "public" funds. As a result, the funds are held on account for advisory councils, and are dedicated for public recreation purposes. The Advisory Councils, with the accounting and record keeping provided by ARC, are stewards of the funds. If, for example, a specific advisory council ceases to exist, a successor advisory council would be organized, officially 'recognized', and the funds and obligations of the former advisory council would be transferred to the new one.

### **Do advisory council members have any liability for advisory council programs?**

Any individual, including advisory councils members, can be sued by someone who believes they have been "wronged" as a result of an advisory council decision, or the decision of an individual advisory council member. However, as volunteers to the department, the department and the City Law Department would defend the advisory council member if the action or decision was within the normal course and scope and duties of advisory council members. This defense of volunteers is in accordance with Seattle Municipal Code SMC4.64.010. If, on the other hand, an advisory council member was sued for actions unrelated to his or her role as an advisory council member, or if the advisory council member was sued as the result of an illegal act or decision, neither the department nor the Law Department would be able to defend against such an action.

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **What is the basis for Department for review of Advisory Council grant applications?**

Department review and approval of advisory council grant requests is based on the fact that the Department is legally responsible and assumes liability for all programs and activities undertaken at Department facilities. In addition, Department approval is based on the fact that the proposed grants generally include work to be performed by Department staff, and staff responsibility for seeing that grant conditions or goals are met. Normally, Department staff will be participating with advisory councils in the planning and development of grant proposals, and as a result, it would be highly unusual for the Department to decline approval an advisory council proposed grant request. Department approval is usually by the Superintendent, or his/her designee the appropriate director or manager.

### **What is the basis of the Department review and approval of Advisory Council programs and budgets?**

The Department review and approval of programs are based on the fact that the Department is legally responsible and liable for programs and activities taking place at Department owned facilities. Normally, such reviews would be directed at ensuring that the programs are consistent with the purposes and objectives of the Department and the advisory council, are feasible and adequately financed, can be scheduled at the facility along with other competing programs, and can be adequately overseen and supported by Department staff. The approval of such programs also includes approval of fees required to support the program. Since Department staff are usually participating with advisory councils in the planning and development of programs, it would be very unusual for a proposed program to not be approved. The development and adoption of annual budget by advisory councils is a fundamental part of program planning by the advisory council. The budgets should identify specific programs for the coming year, providing Department staff the direction necessary for their planning and implementation of the programs. In addition, the budget should address and resolve any financial deficits, should allocate excess revenues to agreed upon purposes, and identify special projects to which the advisory council may want to direct their fund raising efforts. Annual budgets are also approved by the Department for the same reasons noted above for program approval. Approvals are by the Superintendent or his/her designee, and in most cases will be the Department coordinator or Recreation Manager.

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Must advisory councils approve the uses and expenditures of advisory council funds?**

Yes. In keeping with the partnership between the Department and the Advisory Councils, both must approve the uses of advisory council funds. In many cases, this approval is expressed in terms of an advisory council approval for expenditures up to a certain amount for a certain program, rather than separate approvals by the full advisory council for each individual check written for a program. This allows for smooth operations, between advisory council meetings and during summer periods when the council may not meet. In such cases, an Advisory Council representative approves individual disbursements, requested by the Department staff.

### **What are the appropriate purposes for advisory council petty cash funds and how should they be limited?**

Use of petty cash funds may only be for approved programs or purposes, when the expenditure is less than a specified dollar amount, and when the need for the expenditure could not reasonably have been anticipated and processed as a normal advisory council disbursement. The petty cash custodian accepts personal financial responsibility for these funds.

### **May Department staff expend advisory council funds for purposes not authorized by the advisory councils?**

No.

### **When a disagreement arises between an advisory council and the coordinator, how should it be resolved?**

Disagreements between advisory councils and coordinators will be resolved through the efforts, in order, of the appropriate Recreation Manager, Division Director. The appropriate DPR staff will be expected to respond in a timely way. In addition, the DPR Superintendent, the Park Board, and the ARC Board, through its president, are all resources that may be called upon to resolve disputes.

How does a coordinator secure advisory council approvals for budgets, programs and expenditures if the advisory council does not meet or does not have the necessary quorum and members are poor in their attendance and participation?

Typically, these circumstances are dealt with by the AC chairperson seeking approvals (votes) from individual advisory council members by phone. Such voting by phone should involve all available AC members. The action is then reported and confirmed at the next regular meeting of the advisory council.

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Who is responsible and has the authority. for setting fees to advisory council programs?**

The advisory council may recommend levels or ranges for fees, but the coordinator normally will set final fees as a part of their responsibility for operating the program within a budget as authorized by the advisory council. The coordinators, and the Department, have the additional responsibility of maintaining reasonably comparable and equitable fees for similar programs and-services at other facilities throughout the park system.

### **To whom are coordinators responsible? The Department? The advisory council?**

.As employees of the Department of Parks and Recreation, coordinators are responsible to the department and their immediate managers and directors. However, two additional factors exist and must be recognized. First, the coordinators job-as defined by the department-includes working with, and being responsive to the advisory council in planning and implementing programs to meet the recreational, educational and cultural needs of each community or are of interest. To be successful, a coordinator must work cooperatively and effectively with the advisory council. Second, the advisory council delegates authority to the coordinator to plan and implement approved advisory council programs, and the coordinator is responsible to the advisory council for doing so.

### **Should advisory councils have some way of evaluating coordinator's performance?**

Yes. Performance evaluations of coordinators are done by the department and should include an assessment of the coordinator's work with the advisory council. As a result, it would be beneficial for advisory councils to communicate with recreation managers, and directors on their view of the effectiveness with which the coordinator implements programs, works with and supports the advisory council, and generally strives to ensure that the programs and activities meet the needs of the community. Such feedback from advisory councils on staff performance in the operation of the facility, its programs, and support of the advisory council is valued by the management of the department. When a vacancy occurs at a DPR facility, the Recreation Manager or Division Director will attend an AC meeting to explain the hiring process, answer questions, and take input from the AC on staffing needs for their facility.



# COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **Who hires advisory council staff?**

Advisory council staff are employees of the advisory council, not the Department. AC staff are 'hired' through the execution of a specialist agreement signed by both the advisory council and the RC. The AC may participate in the hiring process through creation of Personnel committees, or participation in interview processes to the extent they wish. Hiring decisions are made jointly by the RC and the AC, unless the AC has, delegated this responsibility to the RC, which is often the case.

## **Who provides day-to-day supervision of AC employees?**

Day-to-day supervision of AC employees is performed by DPR staff, acting as the agent of the AC. This is the result of a couple of factors:

- The Department staff have an obligation to oversee and direct the work of advisory council staff as a result of Department staff having overall the legal responsibility and liability for all of the activities taking place at Department facilities, and
- Due to the volunteer nature of advisory councils, advisory council members are unable to be on-site during all hours of operation.

## **How are AC staff evaluated?**

Evaluation of AC staff is an element of normal day to day supervision provided by DPR staff. In addition, advisory councils may provide input to and advise the RC on the performance of advisory council staff.

## **Who terminates advisory council employees?**

Should the need arise, an advisory council employee would be terminated by the coordinator, on the behalf of the advisory council, and in a fashion consistent with the legal rights and responsibilities of employers and employees. Advisory councils may provide input and advise the Coordinator on the performance of advisory council staff that may result in the termination of such staff.

## **Who has the responsibility for setting advisory council staff wages?**

The Coordinator sets wages for advisory council staff within Department guidelines and based on both the employment market, and wages being paid for the same or similar work at other department facilities.

## COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **What happens if advisory council members can't agree on some program or action?**

Advisory Council discussions and debates should take place in the context of normal parliamentary procedures with advisory council members voting on decisions regarding programs or other actions. If a majority of the members support a proposed program or action, it would be implemented, subject only to department review' and approval as described elsewhere in this material. It is not a requirement that all advisory council members agree to a proposed action, although it is helpful-and often the case-that there is a general consensus on major advisory council decisions. in the event of differences of opinion among advisory council members, the Coordinator may be able to provide useful information or professional advice based on experiences at other department facilities, or experiences of other advisory councils, or experiences of ARC.

### **How should advisory council minutes be produced, distributed and approved?**

Minutes should be taken by an advisory council member designated by the advisory council. They should be read, or distributed, and approved by the advisory council at their next meeting. The coordinator, if requested, may be able to assist with production and copying and distribution of minutes, but does not record or approve them. Minutes should be posted at the facility, along with other information about the advisory council.

### **Who in the Department is responsible for working with the ARC Board?**

Generally, the department's Director of Finance & Administrative Services is expected to work with the ARC Board on financial issues. On operating and programmatic issues affecting advisory councils and department programs, the Directors of the South, Central, North and Citywide Park and Recreation Services Divisions will work with the Board, either directly or through a designated Manager. There is also a committee of RCs, who act as information liaisons between the ARC Board and ARC Office and the line staff.

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

### **How are ARC member fees determined and what services do they provide to advisory councils?**

ARC member fees are set by the ARC Board of Directors, which is composed of 15 representatives of advisory councils. The ARC Board will consult with the department on fees and proposed fees changes on a regular basis. The fees are based on the cost of providing individual advisory councils with the accounting services required by: 1) the advisory councils, 2) the department and the City, and 3) by local, state and federal law. The latter includes insuring that advisory councils comply with all of the licensing, reporting, and tax payment requirements that apply to private, non-profit corporations.

### **What are the responsibilities of the ARC staff?**

Under the direction of the ARC Board, ARC staff are responsible for insuring the accurate accounting of all advisory council revenues and expenditures, and for seeing that all related legal requirements are met, including maintaining required licenses, and the timely filing of local, state, and -federal tax returns. In addition, they are responsible for providing advisory councils with the financial reports necessary for the advisory councils to monitor their programs and budgets. Since advisory councils delegate authority for day to day program operation to coordinators, the financial reporting described above must also meet the needs of coordinators. Finally, ARC staff are responsible for working with coordinators and the department to define the procedures and responsibilities necessary for the accurate and timely processing of revenues, disbursements, and financial reports.

### **Should Department staff have some way of evaluating the performance of ARC staff?**

Yes. DPR staff may use appropriate channels to provide feedback to the ARC Board on the effectiveness of the services provided by ARC staff to coordinators and individual advisory councils.

### **What should be the process for resolution of disagreements between coordinators and the ARC staff?**

A brief description of the nature of the disagreement should be forwarded to the appropriate Recreation Manager, who will seek to resolve the dispute with the ARC staff manager. In the event that this is unsuccessful, the dispute should be referred to the appropriate Division Director, the Director of Finance and Administration if the dispute is financial in nature, and the ARC Board president. These parties will be responsible for resolving the dispute if it is within their powers to do so. If not possible, the dispute will be resolved by the Superintendent and the president of the ARC Board subject to the powers granted to each.

# **ADVISORY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS (SUMMARIES)**

## **I. City Ordinance 105655**

This ordinance, passed by the City Council in 1976, authorized the Department of Parks and Recreation to "recognize" community advisory councils and the Associated Recreation Council (ARC). Some ACs were already in existence. The ordinance defines the relationships among DPR, ARC and ACs and authorizes DPR to contract with ACs.

## **II. Agreement between the City of Seattle Department of Parks and Recreation and Recreation Advisory Councils**

This standard agreement constitutes the basic contract between DPR and ACs. It is specific to each AC and provides "recognition" of the named AC. It can be perpetual until terminated by the parties. The Agreement lists "Roles and Responsibilities" of DPR and the AC. It has as "exhibits" the documents III., IV., and V listed immediately below.

## **III. Policies and Procedures for Recognition of Community Advisory Councils**

This standard document is "Exhibit A of the Agreement. It establishes minimum criteria for recognition of an AC by DPR and also sets conditions for DPR to withdraw recognition of an AC (and hence terminate the Agreement). Essentially, ACs must agree to assist DPR (and DPR agrees to assist ACs), must adopt a constitution (similar to the standard), fulfill membership, have meetings, work with DPR staff and join ARC. This document also states that "the Department has no desire to over-control or over-regulate the activities of the various Councils." The "Policies and Procedures" has two appendices: A sample constitution for ACs and a standard profile sheet for AC members (see VI 11.).

## **IV. Policies and Procedures for Financial Management of Community Advisory Councils**

This standard document is "Exhibit B" of the Agreement. Its title describes its purpose and content. Essential features concern ACs' exclusive use of DPR facilities, budgeting, accumulation of surpluses, fees for programs, authorization of expenditures, and salary ranges for AC employees, among many. This document also establishes many DPR commitments to serving and assisting ACs.

# **ADVISORY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS (SUMMARIES)**

## **V. Advisory Council General Terms and Conditions**

This boiler plate document is "Exhibit B" of the Agreement. As its title suggests/ this document is a "general" recital of legal features of the contractual relationship between the City (of which DPR is part) and ACs. It adds some reporting and record inspection elements to the DPR/AC relationships along with nondiscrimination and affirmative action language.

## **VI. Advisory Council Constitution**

A standard constitution has been provided by DPR. Some modifications are occasioned for some ACs. Each AC constitution must be approved and accepted by the Superintendent of DPR. The constitution sets the purpose of the specific AC and lists objectives the AC intends to satisfy by its activities. The constitution also defines the membership, officer structure, terms of office and how to conduct elections, set up committees, meeting requirements and quorums, and, importantly, how to change the constitution as necessary or desirable. An AC must adhere to its constitution.

## **VII. Advisory Council By-laws**

By-laws provide greater detail to how a specific AC intends to function. The by-laws are essentially an AC's own rules for itself. By-laws can usually be more easily changed or amended than a constitution. By-laws can detail specific activities or goals of the AC, set specific meeting times, set the order of business of meetings, establish standing committees and define their purpose and function, set terms for "telephone votes" and many other general operating standards for a specific AC. Some ACs may not have by-laws. Agreeing on by-laws can give more structure to an organization and provide certainty to members as to how business will be conducted.

## **VIII. Your Seattle Parks and Recreation Advisory Council Member Profile**

This one page document is a form to be filled out by a candidate for AC membership describing the individual's interest in and abilities to assist the AC in its goals and objectives. When signed by various DPR officials and finally the Superintendent, the candidate is "appointed." It is an appendix of "Policies and Procedures for Recognition of Community Advisory Councils."

# **ADVISORY COUNCIL ORGANIZATIONAL AND LEGAL DOCUMENTS (SUMMARIES)**

## **IX. Articles of Incorporation**

Most ACs do not have their own Articles of Incorporation. A few ACs have been independently incorporated as a separate non-profit corporations in Washington State and under its laws governing corporations. Articles of Incorporation establish the purpose of the organization, define its powers and design the legal structure of the organization including the naming of its board of directors. By-laws are usually required for non-profit corporations. Articles of Incorporation require updating through the Washington Secretary of State upon and change in the document or in the names of the directors. Most ACs obtain their legal existence as non-profit organizations through the ARC which serves as the umbrella non-profit corporation, has its own Articles of Incorporation and makes all ACs its members.

## **X. Articles of Incorporation of the Associated Recreation Council (ARC)**

ARC was incorporated in 1975 as a Washington non-profit organization. Its stated purpose is "...to benefit and support DPR and its officially recognized ACs in providing adequate and quality public recreation programs." ARC's non-profit status is shared with most ACs as members of ARC. Most ACs are not separate and independent non-profit organizations, ARC's Articles of Incorporation require by-laws.

## **XI. By-Laws of the Associated Recreation Council**

As required by the Articles of Incorporation, ARC has by-laws which. give further structure to the organization regarding purpose, officers, meetings, composition of the board and membership. ARCs members are individual representatives from each officially recognized AC along with the individuals elected to the ARC board of directors.

## **XII. Associated Recreation Council Accounting Manual**

The ARC Accounting Manual provides fine detail to many of the elements of financial management of ARC and the ACs. Procedures for handling financial records, managing funds, hiring AC employees, registering the payroll, budgeting and fee collection and deposit are in the manual. Examples of forms used for various purposes are also included.